

CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A measuring tape comprising:

a first axis;

a spool and a first sheave turnable together about said first axis;

an elongate flexible blade having a free end and a terminal end, the free end adapted to extend out of ~~[[said]]~~ a housing, said blade wound upon said spool when ~~and normally~~ in a fully retracted position on said spool;

a second axis;

a spiral spring assembly and a second sheave turnable together about said second axis, said spiral spring assembly including a spirally wound spring wound ~~therearound~~ there around and contained there within so as to wind and unwind about said second axis as said second sheave turns; and

a belt connecting said first sheave and said second sheave, whereby extension of said blade from its retracted position causes turning of said spool which in turn causes turning of said spring assembly to place the spring of said spring assembly in a spring-wound condition which spring will cause retraction of said blade upon release of said blade from an extended position.

2. (currently amended) A measuring tape as defined in Claim 1 further comprising a housing for enclosing said spool, said first sheave, said blade, said spring assembly, said second sheave, and said belt, said housing having a top, bottom sides, and ends with said elongate flexible blade having ~~[[a]]~~ said free end adapted to extend out of said housing, the free end including a fixture adapted to be grasped by a user so as to extend said blade from its ~~normally~~ extracted position substantially inside said housing.

3. (previously presented) A measuring tape as defined in Claim 2 wherein said housing includes at least two spaced apart inwardly facing side wall surfaces defining a hollow interior of said housing, wherein the side wall surfaces are substantially flat.

4. (previously presented) A measuring tape as defined in Claim 1 including distance measuring indicia imprinted on said elongate flexible blade.

5. (cancelled)

6. (previously presented) A measuring tape as defined in Claim 1 wherein the spring of said spring assembly includes a bias which increases in proportion to the extent of said flexible blade caused to be paid off of said spool.

7. (previously presented) A measuring tape as defined in Claim 1 including hand and finger contoured pads secured to an exterior surface of a housing.

8. (previously presented) A measuring tape as defined in Claim 1 wherein a free end of said elongate blade includes a bracket which militates against the passage of the free end into a housing.